

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05 NSAE-00 PA-01

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FM USMISSION NATO

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INFO USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

USLOSACLANT

CINCLANT

USDOCOSOUTH

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 1328

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, UK

SUBJ: UK DEFENSE REVIEW; DRAFT PRESS RELEASE

MINIMIZE CONSIDERED

REF: USNATO 1295

IS HAS CIRCULATED DRAFT PRESS RELEASE ON UK DEFENSE REVIEW AS  
PART OF SYG PO/75/28, WHICH DPC WILL DISCUSS AT MEETING MARCH 11  
(REFTEL). IN LETTER COVERING DRAFT, SYG NOTES THAT UK WILL PUBLISH  
WHITE PAPER ON MARCH 19, AND SUGGESTS THAT IT WOULD BE QUOTE  
DESURABLE AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH PRECEDENT FOR NATO VIEWS ON  
THE NEW PLANS TO BE PUBLISHED AT THE SAME TIME. END QUOTE. MISSION  
COMMENT: UNLESS WASHINGTON INSTRUCTS OTHERWISE, MISSION INTENDS  
TO SEEK INTRODUCTION OF LANGUAGE WHICH MAKES CLEAR THAT UK  
RESOURCE CEILING WAS NOT REPEAT NOT A SUBJECT FOR NATO CONSULTATION  
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DUE TO FIRM BRITISH DECISION ON RESOURCES PRIOR TO CONSULTATIONS,  
AND THAT COMPENSATORY MEASURES DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH 1(E)  
WILL NOT RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT EXTRA COST. OTHERWISE, DRAFT IS  
ACCEPTABLE. ACTION REQUESTED: WASHINGTON COMMENTS ON ABOVE

AND FURTHER GUIDANCE IN TIME FOR DPC MEETING 1600, MARCH 11.

BEGIN TEXT:

CHANGES IN UK DEFENCE PROGRAMME - NATO VIEWS

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE USUAL NATO PRACTICE, THE UK GOVERNMENT, FOLLOWING THE COMPLETION OF THEIR DEFENCE REVIEW INITIATED THE PROCESS OF CONSULTATION WITH THEIR NATO ALLIES IN DECEMBER 1974. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHANGES PROPOSED HAVE BEEN ASSESSED BY THE NATO MILITARY AUTHORITIES AND THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL EXCHANGES OF VIEWS IN THE DEFENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE ALLIANCE. AS A RESULT THE JUDGEMENT OF NATO ON THE FINAL PLANS PUBLISHED IN TODAY'S WHITE PAPER MAY BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

(A) THE ALLIANCE HAS EXPRESSED SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING WITH THE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES WHICH THE UK IS NOW UNDERGOING, HAS PAID TRIBUTE TO THE SUBSTANTIAL MILITARY CONTRIBUTION WHICH THE UK HAS TRADITIONALLY MADE TO THE ALLIANCE AND WELCOMES THE ASSURANCE THAT NATO COMMITMENTS REMAIN THE FIRST CHANGE ON BRITISH DEFENCE RESOURCES.

(B) THEY NOTE WITH PARTICULAR SATISFACTION THAT NO SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS ARE ENVISAGED (IN ADVANCE OF AND MBFR AGREEMENT) IN THE LAND AND AIR FORCES DEPLOYED IN THE CENTRAL REGION, THAT THE UK PROPOSES TO MAINTAIN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ITS PRESENT CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC DETERRENT, AND TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE TACTICAL NUCLEAR SUPPORT TO ACE ON THE PRESENT SCALE

(C) THEY HAVE NEVERTHELESS EXPRESSED THEIR DEEP DISQUIET AT THE SCALE OF THE REDUCTIONS PROPOSED WHICH AFFECT THE VALIDITY OF NATO DEFENCE TO SOME DEGREE IN EVERY AREA AND WEAKEN NATO'S CONVENTIONAL MILITARY CONFIDENTIAL

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CAPABILITY VIS-A-VIS THE WARSAW PACT. THE CHANGES OF SPECIAL CONCERN ARE:

(I) THE REDUCTION OF REINFORCEMENT CAPABILITY IN THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN REGIONS;

(II) THE REMOVAL OF MARITIME AND AIR FORCES FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA;

(III) THE DECLINE IN MARITIME CAPABILITIES IN THE EASTERN ATLANTIC AND CHANNEL AREAS.

(D) THEY HAVE ALSO POINTED TO THE POLITICAL AND

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THESE CHANGES PARTICULARLY IN THE SOUTHERN REGION, AND THEIR POSSIBLE EFFECT ON THE SOLIDARITY OF THE ALLIANCE. THEY HAVE REMINDED THAT UK GOVERNMENT THAT, IN THE WORDS OF THE OTTAWA DECLARATION "THE COMMON DEFENCE IS ONE AND INDIVISIBLE". REDUCTIONS IN THE DEFENCE CONTRIBUTION BY A MAJOR PARTNER IN THE ALLIANCE CAN POSSIBLY HAVE REPROCUSSIONS ELSEWHERE.

(E) THE ALLIANCE IS PLEASED TO NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT IN RESPONSE TO THEIR REQUEST, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO CONSIDER CERTAIN COMPENSATORY MEASURES TO OFFSET THE MORE DAMAGING FEATURES OF THE NEW PLAN, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS THE ANTI-SUBMARINE CAPABILITIES OF THE NATO MARITIME COMMANDERS, THE SUPPORT OF THE SOUTHER REGION AND OTHER REINFORCEMENT COMMITMENTS. THEY ATTACH PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO THE UNDERTAKINGS TO CONTINUE TO PARTICUCPATE IN NATO MARITIME EXERCISES AND IN THE NAVAL ON-CALL FORCE MEDITERRANEAN, AND TO MAINTAIN CERTAIN REINFORCEMENT OPTIONS FOR THE SOUTHERN REGION.

2. THE ALLIANCE HAS URGED THE UNITED KINGDOM TO KEEP THEIR

NEW PROGRAMME UNDER REVIEW, IN CONSULTATION WITH THEIR ALLIES AND IN THE LIGHT OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SECURITY SITUATION AS THEY ARISE. THEY HOPE THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO JUDGE THE SCALE AND NATURE OF ITS CONFIDENTIAL

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MILITARY CONTRIBUTION TO NATO NOT IN FINANCIAL TERMS ALONE, BUT IN TERMS OF ITS TOTAL VALUE TO DETERRENCE AND DEFENCE THROUGHOUT THE ALLIANCE.  
END TEXT.BRUCE

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